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AUTHOR Cullers, Benjamin D.
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ABSTRACT

Two educational organizations, a community junior college and a junior high school, were examined to ascertain the amount of participation desired by members of each organization. It was believed that the higher the degree of professional authority within the organization, i.e., the greater the length of training required of its members, the higher would be the degree of participation desired by its members. Study subjects consisted of two groups, 16 full-time community college instructors in the university transfer program and 19 junior high school teachers. Respondents were asked to indicate on Likert questionnaires the amount of participation they would like to have in six categories: leadership, motivation, communication, interaction-influence, decision-making, and performance skills, thus revealing preferences in these areas for exploitative authoritative, benevolent authoritative, consultative, or participatory administrative systems. Results indicated that the junior high school teachers desired a slightly greater amount of participation, though the difference was not significant. Findings, thus, appeared to support the idea that not all teachers or instructors desire a great amount of organizational participation because some members are not ready for in-depth participation. Such individuals may have a greater need for security, affiliation, or self-esteem than for participation in the affairs of the organization. A bibliography is included. (MB)

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A COMPARISON OF THE DEGREE OF PARTICIPATION DESIRED

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By Benjamin D. Cullers
Dean of Students
Southeastern Illinois College

JC 790057

PROFESSIONAL AND SEMI-PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS - A COMPARISON OF THE DEGREE OF PARTICIPATION DESIRED

THEORETICAL RATIONALE

When professional organizations such as modern hospitals and universities are examined, it is clear that authority rests, in large part, in the hands of professionals rather than administrators alone. Participation on the part of professional organizational members in the affairs of the organization is expected and desired. However, the degree of participation expected and desired by members of non-professional and semi-professional organizations may differ greatly from their professional counterparts.

Administrative authority in organizations is based on a power hierarchy. Roles are linked in superordinate/subordinate relationships with superordinate roles containing a greater amount of power and prestige. Superordinates control and coordinate the activities of subordinates in the organization. On the other hand, professional actions are valid, not on the basis of power, but on the basis of such action being the right action according to the professional's best knowledge. Thus, it is apparent that these two forms of authority are directly opposed to each other.

Most organizations contain primarily one form of authority, yet to some degree both forms exist in all organizations. It is thought that such a comdition creates organizational conflict. Corwin (1965) states that "in a professional-employee society, the fundamental tension is not between the individual and the system, but between the parts of the system-between the professional and the bureaucratic principles of organization." Thompson (1961) adds that "modern bureaucracy is an adaptation of older organizational forms, altered to meet the needs of specialization (professionalization). We find in short, specialization (professionalization) and hierarchy together."

Organizations may be classified as professional or semi-professional according to the length of training of their professional employees (Etzioni, 1964). "Full-fledged professional organizations" are those organizations that employ professionals whose professional training is considered long (five or more years); "semi-professional organizations" are those organizations that employ professionals whose training is shorter in years (less than five years). These two types of organizations usually differ in respect to goals and privileges as well as length of training of its professionals.

In relation to authority in professional and semi-professional organzations, it often appears that a greater number of women are found in semi-professional than in professional organizations. Etzioni (1964) points out that "despite the effects of emancipation, women are on the average more amenable to administrative control than men." Furthermore, he adds, "It is difficult to determine if the semi-professional organizations have taken the form they have because of the high percentage of female employees, or if they recruit females because of organizational reasons; in all likelihood these factors support each other." Research

by Alutto and Belasco (1973) indicates that females ("primarily at the elementary school levels") tended to be satisfied with the existing degree of participation, but that men ("predominantly at secondary school levels") tended to desire a greater degree of organizational participation.

Another facet of organizational authority, especially in semi-professional organizations, is the emergence of a dual authority structure. Hanson (1973) states that "rather than formal authority remaining in the hand of administrators and informal control in the hands of teachers, the salient ingredient of the new structure is that formal authority will rest in the hand of both administrators and teachers." In other words, schools may be developing professional as well as administrative authority structures. Hills (1973) believes that schools are moving slowly toward the collegial type of organization, characterized by a high degree of professional authority. On the other hand, some professional organizations are also undergoing changes in authority structure. Of professional organizations in higher education, Kauffman (1973) states: "As public boards of control and coordination proliferate in public institutions of higher education, with their ultimate power in the setting of institutional priorities, it seems clear that faculty power will diminish proportionately. For those faculty members who have traditionally maintained a professional posture and independence, these boards will be a source of frustration."

With Etzioni's dichotomy of professional and semi-professional organizations in mind, it was determined to examine two educational organizations, a community junior college and a junior high school, in an effort to ascertain the amount of participation desired by members of each organization. It was believed that the higher the degree of professional authority within the organization,

the higher would be the degree of participation desired by its members. Therefore it was assumed that organizational members in professional organizations would desire a greater degree of participation than would their counterparts in semi-professional organizations. For the purpose of the examination, the community junior college would more closely fit the professional organization category and the junior high school would appear to resemble more closely the semi-professional organization classification. However, if placed on an organizational continuum from professional to non-professional, the community college in the survey would perhaps be slightly less professional than the average community college and the junior high school would perhaps be somewhat more professional than some junior high schools.

Because of the limitation stated above as well as the small sample used (two organizations), no attempt will be made to generalize the findings in this particular case to all other professional and semi-professional organizations.

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

The subjects in this study consisted of two groups: (1) twenty-one full-time instructors in a community junior college (university transfer program), and (2) twenty-three junior high school teachers. The community college faculty was composed of fourteen males and seven females. The junior high school teachers were made up of six males and seventeen females. All members of the community college faculty held advanced masters' degrees and advanced graduate education. Five members of the junior high school faculty held masters' degrees and eighteen held bachelors' degrees. Sixteen community college instructors and nineteen junior high school teachers participated in the study.

INSTRUMENTATION

The community college faculty was measured by means of the Likert Profile of Organization Characteristics Questionnaire (Likert, 1969). The junior high school teachers were measured by the Likert Profile of a School Questionnaire. Both Likert questionnaires contain the categories of (1) leadership, (2) motivation, (3) communication, (4) interaction-influence, (5) decision-making and (6) performance goals.

Each of the items on the Likert questionnaires are arranged on a continuum so that respondents must indicate a score of one to twenty on each item. A check on the continuum from one to five indicates a desire for an "exploitative authoritative" administrative system; a score of six to ten on each item indicates the desire for a "benevolent authoritative" administrative system; a score of eleven to fifteen on each item indicates a desire for a "consultative" administrative system; and a score of sixteen to twenty on each item shows the desire for a "participative group" administrative system. Mean scores were computed for each of the six categories on the Likert questionnaires, such as leadership, decision-making, and motivation. In this way it was possible to classify each of the six categories for both groups as (1) exploitative authoritative, (2) benevolent authoritative, (3) consultative or (4) participative group. Respondents were asked to indicate on the Likert questionnaires the amount of participation they would like to have in each of the six categories listed on the questionnaire.

An analysis of variance (with two groups) was used to test the difference between mean scores of the two groups.

RESULTS

Table I depicts the results obtained on the Likert questionnaires for both the community college and junior high school. The mean scores of both groups are shown as computed for the six categories of leadership, motivation, communication, interaction-influence, decision-making, and performance goals.

Table II indicates the grand mean score for both groups and the results of the analysis of variance test.

Table I

A Comparison of Mean Scores on the Six Categories of the Likert Questionnaires

Categories	Means For Community College Instructors	Means for Junior High School Teachers
1. Leadership	16.5	16.9
2. Motivation	16.9	16.9
3. Communication	16.5	16.7
4. Interaction-Influence	16.4	16.5
5. Decision-Making	16.4	16.4
6. Performance Goals	16.6	18.0

Table II

A Comparison of the Grand Mean Score for Each Group and Level of Significance

Organization	Grand Mean Score	F-Value
1. Community Junior College	16.39	Not
2. Junior High School	16.45	Significant

DISCUSSION

An examination of Tables I and II reveals only a slight amount of difference in the amount of participation desired by members of both organizations. Although the junior high school teachers desire a greater amount of participation as a group than do the community college instructors a group, the difference is not significant when the analysis of variance is used. As the research of

Alutto and Belasco (1973) points out, a small number in each organization desire to participate very little in the affairs of the organization. Sergiovanni and Carver (1973) stress the importance of motivating teachers at the proper "needs level". It is possible that all teachers and instructors are not ready for "ultraparticipatory self-actualizing adminstration" and that too much participation (for those individuals) will do more harm than good. The findings in this study appear to support the idea that not all teachers or instructors desire a great amount of organizational participation because some members are not ready for in-depth participation. Such individuals may have a greater need for security, affiliation or self-esteem than for participation in the affairs of the organization.

Why, in this particular sample, was there no significant difference in the degrees of participation desired by the community college instructors and the junior high school teachers? Perhaps one of the foremost reasons is that the junior high school, in this sample, has developed, or is in the process of developing, a dual authority structure. Through internal organizational processes and professional negotiations, the junior high school teachers may be developing a "professional bureaucracy" - an authority structure which is composed of an administrator-teacher partnership (Sergiovanni and Carver, 1973). The junior high school in this sample seemed to be one which is moving toward the collegial type of organization.

Although a high degree of participation is sometimes desired, such participation may be in areas that relate more to the nature of the environment, than the nature of the task itself. For example, teachers may desire greater participation in matters concerning salary, supervision, working conditions,

status, security, policy, or interpersonal relations. However, this kind of participation does not neceesarily lead to more professional authority regarding the work itself, responsibility, achievement, and recognition. It may be that professional organizational members desire and practice a greater degree of participation in these latter areas than do the semi-professional organizational members.

Although the findings of this particular study cannot be generalized to other professional and semi-professional organizations, much empirical knowledge can be gained from this and similar studies. Certainly administrative personnel need to assess the motivational level of the professional staff for the purpose of involving them to the degree desired. If professional staff members do not desire to participate at high levels, it would be unwise to attempt a highly participative approach. Research by Alutto and Belasco (1973) indicates that many teachers feel "decisional equilibrium" (actual participation equals desired participation) and "decisional saturation" (actual participation exceeds desired participation). Yet many teachers may desire greater involvement as did most teachers in this sample. By an awareness of the desired degree of participation, the administrator working closely with the faculty is in a position to provide for it. To often administrators rely on hunches or feelings rather than data to provide them with such knowledge. When hunches and feelings are incorrect, low staff morale, high turnover, and poor performance from the professional staff may result.

In the larger context of organizational science, greater numbers of professional and semi-professional organizations need to be compared. Perhaps many semi-professional with time. It may be that typically bureaucratic

organizations are being challenged to develop dual authority structures. As societies, cultures, and individuals change, organizations, both professional and semi-professional, must adapt and maintain some flexibility or they become dysfunctional. The "professional bureaucracy" (Sergiovanni and Carver, 1973) may be developing in both professional and semi-professional organizations. Organizational research on a larger scale is needed for building theory which will guide organizations in practical situations. Studies comparing professional and semi-professional organizations should provide one avenue for extending organizational knowledge.

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